DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 137 456 UD 016 830

AUTHOR Banks, W. Curtis; McQuater, Gregory V.
TITLE Achievement Motivation and Black Children. IRCD Bulletin, Volume XI, Number 4, Fall, 1976.
INSTITUTION Columbia Univ., New York, N.Y. Inst. for Urban and Minority Education.
PUB DATE 76
NOTE 9p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Black Achievement; Black Students; *Black Youth; *Caucasian Students; Learning Motivation; *Minority Groups; *Motivation; *Performance; Performance Factors

ABSTRACT

This scholarly report critiques and analyzes material on factors affecting motivation of black children. Different aspects of research in the area are explored. Of particular interest is the research on task-liking. This research indicates that blacks and whites have been shown to assume the same degree of effort orientation toward tasks of high and low interest. Such findings refute the arguments of those who hold that blacks are less able to sustain effort orientations than are whites. Research articles are reviewed and criticized. (Author/BS)

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ED137456

IRCD Bulletin

A Publication of the Institute for Urban and Minority Education
Teachers College, Columbia University

Volume XI, Number 4 Fall 1976

Achievement Motivation and Black Children

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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Over the past several years, the search for the psychological antecedents of divergent patterns of achievement in whites and blacks has given rise to a plethora of literature on the subject. The research conducted thus far may be characterized as falling largely into either of two (admittedly global) theoretical camps. Much energy has been devoted to uncovering the dispositional causes of poor achievement in black persons. Empirical evidence on the motivational (e.g., Mech, 1972; Minigione, 1965; Mussen, 1953), intellectual (e.g., Deutsch & Brown, 1964; Jones, 1967), and personality (e.g., Ames & Ilg, 1967; Cameron, 1968; Roen, 1960) traits that distinguish white from black populations, and high from low achievers has been accumulated. A considerable body of literature dealing with the social-situational determinants of poor achievement in blacks has also been accumulated. Family and child-rearing factors (e.g., Deutsch, 1960; Rosen, 1959; Solomon, Houlihan, Busse, & Parelius, 1971), socioeconomic status (e.g., Epps, 1969; Tulkin, 1968; Turner, 1972), teacher expectancies (e.g., Dietz & Purkey, 1969; Kleinfeld, 1972), and tester's race (e.g., Allen, Dubanoski, & Stevenson, 1966; Katz, Atchison, Epps, & Roberts, 1972; Katz, Henchy, & Allen, 1968) are just a few of the variables whose relationships to achievement orientations have been studied in survey and experimental research.

As would be expected, the findings reported within this literature are as diverse as the theoretical and methodological approaches that generated them. There is, however, one theme that recurs in various theoretical discussions and that has guided quite divergent programs of empirical research: it is the theme of intrinsic versus extrinsic orientations to achievement.

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The preparation of this paper was facilitated by a grant from the Social Science Research Council. The authors wish to thank J. Hubbard and S. Jenkins for their involvement in and contributions to the work that provided a basis for this discussion.

In general, the distinction between extrinsic and intrinsic orientations to achievement relates to the degree to which performance at a task is dependent upon external sources of maintenance such as material reward (Spence, 1971) or success-failure (Weiner & Peter, 1973) as opposed to sources such as information or effort. Since there is no widely accepted operational definition, the precise nature of intrinsic and extrinsic sources of motivation has varied across investigators.

Spence (1971), for example, tested the hypothesis that lower-class children would perform more favorably with material rewards (candy) than with symbolic rewards (light). In her sample of five- and six-year-old black children, performance was indeed found to be better under the material reward condition, except when the children were presented with prior training (instructions) regarding the meaning and significance of the symbolic reward. In this latter instance, performance was enhanced more by the symbolic than by the material rewards. Several other investigations have presented relatively consistent evidence that minority-group and socioeconomically disadvantaged individuals are more generally dependent than white and middle-class persons upon extrinsic rewards (e.g., Terrell, Durkin, & Wiesley, 1959; Zigler & DeLabry, 1962); and that they also tend to develop more slowly from early stages of extrinsic orientations to adult patterns of intrinsic orientations (e.g., Zigler & Kanzer, 1962).

In his review of the evidence relating to poor achievement in minority-group children, Katz (1967) described the "crux of the matter" as the "differential capability of children from different social backgrounds for vigorous and sustained effort on tasks that are not consistently interesting or attractive, and which offer no immediate payoff...." Katz suggested that the inability of Negro students "to sustain academic effort in the absence of immediate external reward" is a result of the failure of early socialization agents (e.g., parents) to reinforce the internalization of such mechanisms as self-control.

Weiner and Peter (1973) have criticized such social-learning conceptions of the development of achievement

orientations, pointing out that there is little actual evidence in support of hypotheses such as Katz's. Instead, they have proposed a model of achievement orientations based upon the cognitive-developmental theories of Piaget (1948) and Kohlberg (1969).

In their investigation of achievement judgments in children, Weiner and Peter hypothesized that effort (what we may call intrinsic) orientations and outcome (what we may call extrinsic) orientations would follow a developmental sequence similar to that of moral concepts (Kohlberg, 1969). Over time, emphasis upon "effort" in achievement (corresponding to "intent" within moral conduct) should increase linearly as emphasis upon outcome (success-failure dependency) should decrease. The results of their investigation were generally consistent with the model proposed; they were also consistent with other developmental findings on intrinsic orientations in minority and disadvantaged groups. Weiner and Peter found that, while the pattern of development of effort orientations in achievement judgments was similar for white and black subjects, blacks appeared to "lag" in their development. The significant interaction of subjects' age, subjects' race, and effort reported by Weiner and Peter represented the tendency for blacks to attain each level of effort orientation approximately one age category later than their white counterparts.

The Weiner and Peter model offers a clearer operationalization of the effort dimension than other models do. In the Weiner/Peter model, effort orientations in achievement are represented by the degree to which an individual values the dimension of effort in achievement performance. Valuation is measured by the difference between the magnitude of reward or approval an individual assigns to performances in which that dimension is present and to performances in which it is absent. As Weiner and Peter point out, this measure avoids the qualitative characteristics of other measures of covert cognitive achievement processes (e.g., *n* Achievement). It also avoids the judgmental imprecision associated with the inference of effort orientations in evaluations of fantasy productions or performance behavior.

What the Weiner and Peter model fails to provide is an explanation for race differences. While social-learning (e.g., Katz, 1967) or trait-dispositional (e.g., McClelland, 1953) approaches offer a basis for predicting and explicating divergent patterns of achievement strivings in race, socioeconomic, and various other cultural subgroups, a "cognitive model" suggests a level of analysis going beneath the social and personality veneers of overt behavior. The emergence of race differences in effort orientations in Weiner and Peter's findings suggests that the basis for such differences may be more fundamental and pervasive than immediate situational factors such as teacher expectancies and less complicated than personality and trait factors such as intelligence and self-concept.

Task-Interest and Instrinsic Motivation

At a simple level, we may consider intrinsic motivation to be directly related to intrinsic interests. That is, insofar as intrinsic motivation is reflected by sustained effort in the absence of extrinsic rewards, it likely represents acquired interests in (or value orientations toward) the task activity.[1] This conception is quite straightforward, and draws heavily upon common intuition and language. Indeed, when we speak of intrinsic interests we normally mean that our attraction to an object or an activity depends less upon the inducements of reward and punishment than upon its inherently (for us) interesting characteristics.

On the surface, such a notion may seem to beg the question. In actuality, it offers an alternative definition of "what is the appropriate question." Most conceptions of the sources of black achievement motivation have assumed that attributes peculiar to blacks, or to the contexts in which achievement activities occur, account for the divergence of blacks from whites. For instance, Katz (1967) has spoken specifically of the relative "inability" of black students to sustain effort in uninteresting or unattractive tasks. The implications of such a hypothesis should be clear: faced with equally disliked tasks, blacks will show a consistent tendency to be less effort-oriented than whites. Moreover, in an analysis of the effects of race and task-liking upon achievement orientations, a consistent pattern of race differences would justify the traditional search for factors peculiar to black achievement. However, to the extent that black and white individuals are uniformly affected by task-liking, we may suggest that the evidence on race differences in achievement reflects a failure of past research to control for task-liking. The issue then becomes not the ability or proclivities of blacks to assume effort orientations, but the tendency of blacks to acquire certain value orientations in regard to specific achievement activities.

Relevant Research

Surprisingly little empirical research has been devoted to the matter of task-interest or task-liking as a moderator of achievement orientations in blacks. This may reflect the assumption that, as commonly defined, achievement is an attribute ascribed to success in only certain kinds of activities. This may account in part for the predominance of academic measures (e.g., GPA, Achievement Test scores) and academic type tasks (e.g., anagrams, arithmetic) in achievement research. However, the literature has been cogently criticized for this limitation (Green and Farquhar, 1965; Gurin, Gurin, Lao, & Beattie, 1969); and it is further interesting to note that early conceptions of "what constitutes achievement" were not nearly so narrow in definition (e.g., McClelland, 1953) as most of the research that has followed.

IRCD Bulletin

Published quarterly by the Institute for Urban and Minority Education. Subscription rate: $4.00 per year. Back issues: 1-9 copies, $1.00 each; 10-24 copies, $0.80 each; 25-49 copies, $0.60 each; 50 copies and over, $0.50 each.

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The Institute for Urban and Minority Education is an agency for human resource development and school organization improvement in the nation's cities. Founded in 1973, the Institute is sponsored by Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, New York 10027.

In two investigations where the effects of task-interest have been studied, the pattern of results tends to support our general notion. Williams and Stack (1972) asked black college students to prepare a persuasive statement to be delivered to another person on one of two topics: "The contributions made by black individuals to society;" or, "The role of the vice-president in national and foreign affairs." The former task was conceived as having high interest value for the subject population, the latter as having low interest value. Consistent with the hypotheses, subjects spent more time reading and seeking information in preparation for the high-interest task than for the low-interest task. Lefcourt and Ladwig (1965), in a study of task persistence, engaged black inmates in a "match game" with a white competitor (confederate of the experimenters). The subjects were led to believe that skill at the task was related to an activity either of high or of low interest to them, and that they could play as many games as they wished. In all instances, the white competitor won all the games. Under these conditions of consistent failure, subjects who believed that the task related to high-interest skills persisted longer than did subjects who believed that it related to low-interest skills.

Insofar as we may infer that effort is a critical factor in the quantity of information seeking and in persistence at a game, we may conclude that effort is enhanced by high interest, or liking for a task. In both the investigations, however, only black subjects were tested. While we may conclude from this evidence what the effects of task-interest are upon achievement orientations in blacks, the critical implications of Katz's hypothesis—that blacks are less effort-oriented than whites on disliked tasks—have remained untested.

Recently, Banks and his associates examined the relationship of task-liking to effort orientations in both black and white adolescents (Banks, McQuater, and Hubbard, 1975). Using the model employed by Weiner and Kukla (1970) and Weiner and Peter (1973), they asked 16- to 18-year-old high school students to make achievement judgments in response to reports about the activities of other teenagers. That high school population had been pretested for task-liking on a list of various activities; and tasks had been selected, for each sex and race subgroup, that were found to be subjectively equivalent as high or low in interest value. In this manner, all subjects were given an opportunity to respond with evaluative judgments of achievement in activities that were equal (for blacks and whites) in high interest value and in low interest value.[2]

Black adolescents and white adolescents were found to be equally effort-oriented in high-interest tasks.[3] Furthermore, the tendency for either group to be outcome-oriented in high-interest tasks was the same.

Effort orientations were found overall to be greater in high-interest than in low-interest tasks, and effort orientations on low-interest tasks were the same for black and white subjects. This last finding is in clear opposition to Katz's (1967) hypothesis that blacks are less able than whites to sustain effort orientations in uninteresting and unattractive tasks.

The only divergence between black and white subjects came over outcome orientation in achievement judgments on low-interest tasks. In that instance, blacks showed a greater tendency toward concern for the factors of success and failure in performance than did white subjects. While effort orientations of black and white adolescents appeared to be uniform across high- and low-interest tasks, outcome orientations were uniform only on high-interest tasks.

This investigation has important implications for a model of achievement orientations based upon the relationship of task-interest and intrinsic motivation. Individuals whose primary and early developmental experiences are within a subcultural context are likely to develop at least some patterns of interests and task-liking that diverge from those of the larger culture. Eating habits, taste preferences, and music are obvious examples. There are, of course, other less obvious divergent interests developing in persons who are exposed to more or less of the opportunities reinforced by the dominant society as valuable, important, and interesting. It would not be argued that tasks such as those characterizing academic performance are specifically devalued within subcultural social-learning; it may, however, reasonably be surmised that such tasks occupy lower positions in the interest hierarchies of individuals denied the tools and opportunities critical to early practice and performance.

Furthermore, subcultural status carries with it the double burden of learning and acquiring both primary group skills and interests and the values and skills imposed by the dominant reinforcing system. Activities that acquire intrinsic value through early experience are not likely to be reinforced by the larger society, while the relatively unfamiliar (and therefore low-interest) skills and activities of the larger society will generally be associated with significant extrinsic rewards (e.g., jobs, status, power). In this respect, for blacks, disliked tasks may be those peculiarly associated with extrinsic reinforcement. Such tasks reflect the interests and values of social agents who are in possession of greater material resources than are primary or reference group members. And such agents are less likely to be sources of nonmaterial reinforcements such as social approval and social comparison.

Another implication of the study by Banks, McQuater, and Hubbard is largely methodological. The failure of past investigators to control for the subjective interest value of achievement tasks could have led prematurely to the conception that blacks are peculiarly unable to assume effort orientations. This is particularly true of research analyzing developmental differences in blacks and whites. In Weiner and Peter's (1973) investigation, for instance, the achievement task in response to which subjects made evaluative judgments was not controlled across race or across age for interest value. The apparent lag in the cognitive development of effort orientations in blacks may reflect a generally lower interest orientation (relative to whites) toward the achievement task employed by those authors. If the cognitive model of achievement offered by Weiner and Peter were to be tested properly, we should expect virtually identical linear patterns of development in black and white children.

Task-Interest and Cognitive Development

Banks, Hubbard, and McQuater (1975) investigated the cognitive development of achievement orientations using the Weiner and Peter model. Certain refinements of design, however, led to a more critical test of the hypothesis of developmental retardation in blacks than was afforded by those previous investigators.

In addition to controlling the race of the examiner as identical to that of each subject group, Banks and his associates controlled the race and the sex of the referent (target of evaluation) within each achievement "story." Recent evidence strongly suggests that such controls are essential, in that evaluative behavior differs greatly toward perceived similar and perceived dissimilar target persons (Banks, in press).

Furthermore, the analysis of the development of effort orientations was undertaken with systematic control across age, sex, and race subgroups for task-interest. All groups were pretested on liking and interest in a list of activities, and achievement tasks were selected for each group that were equivalently high in interest value. In addition, the Weiner and Peter procedure was replicated, using the single task that they employed across all groups.

It was found that when task-interest is controlled across race and age, a more uniform pattern of cognitive development is elicited. Most germane to the present discussion, race differences in the development of effort orientations were found to be nonexistent when task-interest was controlled. The implication is clear. Analyses of race differences in cognitive as well as in performance orientations to achievement may largely have missed the essential issue—the divergence in value and interest orientations between white and nonwhite populations. Clearly, this implication does not argue against the validity of the findings that on certain tasks blacks are systematically less "intrinsically" oriented than whites; but it does argue cogently against the assumption that such divergence reflects the global motivational characteristics of the race groups. Particularly at the level of cognitive development, race differences in intrinsic achievement orientations appear to be nil.

Interests, Values, and Social Influence

As mentioned earlier, task-interests may be presumed to reflect in part the values acquired in early learning and socialization. To the extent that individuals from different race and ethnic groups experience somewhat divergent patterns of cultural socialization, they may reasonably be expected to develop somewhat different intrinsic interests. The conception offered here fits smoothly with more recent models of achievement orientations (e.g., Weiner & Kukla, 1970; Weiner & Peter, 1973) in its focus upon intracognitive processes as the bases for achievement behavior.

Yet, it cannot easily be said that intrapersonal variables alone account for achievement orientations and behavior. A formidable body of literature, particularly that written over the past fifteen years, argues strongly in behalf of the social-situational bases for achievement in blacks (e.g., Katz, 1967) and against an exclusive conception of intrapersonal or trait bases for behavior in general (e.g., Mischel, 1968).

Experimenter Effects and Achievement Performance

Kennedy and Vega (1965), for instance, investigated the effects of the race of the tester upon achievement performances in black southern children. They found that on their oddity discrimination task, black testers evoked higher performance scores than did white testers from their second-, sixth-, and tenth-grade children. Similarly, Allen, Dubanoski, and Stevenson (1966) found that black boys improved more favorably at a marble dropping task when they were reinforced by black experimenters than when they were reinforced by white experimenters.

Irwin Katz and his associates have investigated extensively the relationship between black achievement performance and such social-situational factors as the testers' race. For instance, Katz, Henchy, and Allen (1968) studied the effects of approval and disapproval, and of experimenters' race, upon the performance of seven- to ten-year-old black boys. Overall, black experimenters were found to affect performances more favorably than white experimenters, and approval elicited better performances than did disapproval. Moreover, in summarizing his review of the empirical evidence concerning "experimenter effects" upon achievement performance, Sattler (1970) has observed that:

> Although the... studies (have shown) variable results... a trend is present: Negro experimenters were generally more effective than white experimenters with Negro...children (p.141).

However, in part, it is the variability of the results of the research on black achievement and social influence factors that has discouraged any integrative theory of the relationships. Depending upon the pattern of results, various hypotheses have been entertained. For instance, Baron (1970) has suggested that cognitive consistency dictates that social influence from blacks should be most effective in enhancing the performance of black persons when it is positive; and social influence from white sources should be most effective when it is negative. Katz and his associates have suggested that social reinforcement from black sources may be more effective at times because it evokes less anxiety in blacks than does social reinforcement from whites (Katz & Greenbaum, 1963). Neither of these hypotheses serves to integrate more than a few of the divergent findings in the literature. And both fall as short of an explanation of the general trend summarized by Sattler as the other hypotheses offered (e.g., Veroff, 1967). However, the role of situational variables such as social influence and social reinforcement may be critical in resolving a persistent paradox in the literature on black interest in, and aspirations to, academic achievement.

Values, Aspirations, and Black Achievement

One implication of the conception proposed here of the effects of task-interest upon black achievement orientations is that relatively poor academic performance among blacks reflects the low valuation they have learned for academic tasks. A further implication is that investigations of the child-rearing and early socialization processes of black families would reveal significant negative emphasis (or at least significantly less positive emphasis than in white families) on the values of academic tasks and academic achievement.

A considerable amount of empirical evidence refutes these hypotheses. In a study of the occupational and educational aspirations of 12- and 13-year-old black and white children, blacks were found to aspire to significantly higher levels in both areas than whites (Boyd, 1952). Jones (1967) found that black youths aspired to more professional and to fewer "middle range white-collar" occupations than did white

youths. Similarly, Phillips (1972) has reported that black children valued academic achievement more highly than white or Mexican-American children. Furthermore, in a study by Wylie and Hutchins (1967), black 7th- to 12th-grade students reported not only a greater desire than whites for a college education, but also greater encouragement from their parents to pursue a college degree.

At the same time, blacks have consistently expressed expectations for success in marked contrast to their apparent values and aspirations. For instance, Phillips reported that black subjects expressed the greatest perceived discrepancies (relative to white and Mexican-Americans) between what they desired and what they expected to attain in regard to academic achievement. And Lott and Lott (1963) noted that their black male subjects expressed greater aspiration-expectancy discrepancies regarding occupations than did white males.

In summary, it would seem that the aspirations and value orientations of blacks toward academic tasks and traditional achievement-related goals do not account for their relative failure in those domains. For black persons, desires and liking alone may be insufficient to insure effective achievement orientations and success. What may intervene is the effect of social influence processes such as those mentioned above. However, traditional theoretical models of such processes in black achievement behavior have failed to offer a framework for the necessary analysis.

Social Influence and Interest Orientations

One important effect of social influence can be the transmission of values and interest through social comparison (Festinger, 1954). Festinger has described social comparison as a process of interpersonal assessment through which an individual evaluates the appropriateness and desirability of his beliefs, opinions, and attitudes. Such an evaluative strategy is required because such psychological dimensions cannot be measured against objective standards. The relative effectiveness of other persons as evaluative standards will vary as a function of their similarity to the individual (Festinger, 1954). Similar others share the characteristics and experiences that make them the most appropriate sources of social comparison. Dissimilar others fail to share the important attributes that would facilitate self-evaluation and social comparison.

In this regard we may offer a conception of the manner in which social influence processes might affect or moderate the relationship between value/interest orientations and orientations to achievement.

For black individuals the social influence of similar others (black testers, experimenters, teachers) may serve to convey the appropriate value orientations to be assumed toward achievement tasks. Positive statements from a similar individual regarding the desirability of achievement at a given task are likely to lead to high-interest orientations, characterized by strong effort emphases and relatively weak outcome emphases. Conversely, negative value orientations expressed by similar others may convey the inappropriateness of interest in, and therefore weak effort orientation to those achievement tasks. The same values expressed by dissimilar (in this case, white) others may be expected to convey to a significantly lesser degree the appropriateness or inappropriateness of interest orientations and, therefore, of effort orientations to the achievement task. Distrust may even lead to the assumption that positive values in dissimilar persons convey the inappropriateness of interest and effort in achievement tasks, and vice-versa.

The paradox of high aspirations and values versus low success in academic achievement among blacks suggests a particularly stringent test of the above hypotheses. We should expect that even when the black child's initial interest in or value orientaton toward a task is positive, the supportiveness of a white evaluative agent would evoke low-interest characteristics in achievement. This may be precisely the intuitive, but nonexplicit, basis for widespread opinion that teachers are most effective when they share the ethnic and socioeconomic attributes of their students. Moreover, we should expect that high-interest and high-effort orientations in blacks would vary in direct proportion to the supportiveness (expressed value orientations) of black evaluative agents, but in inverse proportion to the supportiveness of white evaluative agents.

The critical test of these hypotheses has been offered by a study (Banks, McQuater, & Jenkins, 1975) conducted with 15- to 17-year-old black children, using the model of achievement judgments developed by Weiner and Kukla (1970). Banks and his associates employed the following important design innovations:

1. Tasks used for each sex group were pretested for high interest, equivalent across those groups. The sex and race of the target person in each of the achievement judgments was the same as that of the subject, as were the sex and race of the experimenter, and of the "Evaluative Agent."
2. The context of each achievement report was described in terms of an important evaluative agent (a coach in each case) who was either white or black, and whose value orientation toward the task was either positive (greatly desired success) or negative (did not care about success).

The dependent measure calculated to reflect the degree of intrinsic orientation in the achievement judgments of the subjects was the effort valuation score minus the outcome valuation score. Positive scores represented high intrinsic (high effort, low outcome) achievement orientations, while negative scores represented relatively low intrinsic (low effort, high outcome) achievement orientations.

Consistent with the hypotheses, intrinsic achievement orientations were found to vary in direct proportion to the value orientation of the black evaluative agent. Net effort orientations were significantly greater in the supportive black evaluator condition than in the nonsupportive black evaluator condition. By contrast, intrinsic orientations to achievement varied in inverse proportion to the value orientations of the white evaluative agents. The net effort orientations were significantly greater when the white evaluator was nonsupportive than when the white evaluator was supportive.

The implications of these results are contrary to some common intuitions, and to some of the hypotheses entertained in earlier empirical research. It would seem that the debilitating effects that white teachers may have upon the academic performance and achievement strivings of black children do not derive from nonsupportiveness and discrimination. Several investigators have, in fact, failed to de-

monstrate consistent patterns of discriminative evaluations of black students by white teachers (Dietz & Purkey, 1969; Jaeger & Freijo, 1975; Jensen & Rosenfeld, 1974; Miller, 1973). Ironically, the same degree of supportive and positive value orientations expressed by white and by black teachers may have quite divergent effects upon black achievement orientations. It may be the supportiveness of white teachers that undermines academic success in black children.

The hypotheses offered here relate to the manner in which values and interests may be transmitted directly (by black sources) and inversely (by white sources) to black individuals through social comparison. This would imply in part that the relationships between black students and black teachers are somehow more empathic than the relationships between black students and white teachers. Brown (1972) has described such empathy as the actual or assumed similarity of one's interest to those of another, and as "the tendency to orient one's attention toward the psychological characteristics of another in social interactions." Furthermore, in her investigation of empathic processes in black children, empathy was indeed found to be greater in classes where the teacher was black than in classes where the teacher was white.

An alternative hypothesis concerning the results reported by Banks and his associates might relate to the perceived power of white evaluative agents. As alluded to in an earlier section, the transmission of task value orientations by the dominant (white) reinforcing system may largely be via the imposition of extrinsic rewards. The relative power and resources held by white individuals may imply generally that the value orientations they transmit are associated with material reinforcement more than with social approval. Indeed, for blacks, it may be that the only reinforcements that white evaluative agents can effectively offer are extrinsic ones.

Moreover, Lepper and his associates have demonstrated that the imposition of extrinsic reinforcement upon intrinsically interesting tasks undermines intrinsic orientations (Lepper, Green, & Nisbett, 1973). To date, there is not enough evidence to ascertain the validity of such an interpretation of the effects of social influence upon black achievement orientations. However, it should be clear that this, as well as the above hypotheses, relates closely to the association among social influence, intrinsic interests, and intrinsic orientations to achievement tasks. Further research may serve to offer a finer grained analysis of these processes.

General Conclusions

One aim of the conceptual analysis of black achievement orientations offered here is simplification. Past theories of the personality dynamics underlying achievement motivation have offered complex conceptions and highly indirect and qualitative methods of measurement. Social influence models have failed in most cases to integrate the divergent findings of experimenter effects, aspirations, expectancies, and achievement performance in black populations. Within the framework of certain cognitive approaches to achievement motivation, it seems possible to integrate the multiple contributions to achievement orientations of interest, "cultural" values, and social influence without appealing to widely divergent theoretical concepts or to complex and nonquantitative dependent measures.

The variable, task-liking, has represented the concept of interest or value orientation within the work of Banks and his associates. Consistent with their hypotheses and the general conceptualization outlined here, blacks and whites have been shown to assume the same degree of effort orientation toward tasks of high and low interest. Such findings confute the arguments of those who hold that blacks are less able to sustain effort orientations than are whites (e.g., Katz, 1967). Such findings also argue cogently against the hypothesis that blacks are generally less intrinsically oriented toward achievement.

To a large degree, past research has been confined to an analysis of the divergent patterns in achievement of black and white persons with regard to a particular set of tasks—those associated with academic performance. Conceptually, this approach seems to be quite germane to the issues of achievement facing our society. Methodologically, however, it suffers from the failure to control for variables such as task-liking in assessing race differences. What must be kept in proper focus are the different implications of research directed toward assessing the causes of black achievement orientations in general and research directed toward assessing the antecedents of black academic achievement in particular.

The consistent effects of task-interest upon achievement orientations in blacks and whites suggests that race divergences on a particular task (such as academic achievement) may represent divergent value orientations. In part, the work on achievement aspirations was directed toward exploring the implications that blacks value academic success less than do whites. The failure to find such divergent value orientations has led in part to the analysis by Banks, McQuater, and Jenkins of the intervention of social influence in the relationship between intrinsic interests and intrinsic orientations in blacks. The implications of their findings on the critical role played by the race of evaluative agents in achievement settings offer an integration of social-situational and cognitive models of black achievement that has previously been elusive.

A search for family and early socialization contributions to academic failure seems misdirected. The empirical evidence discounts the hypothesis that black homes instill values contrary to academic success; also, initial value orientations alone are unable to sustain the achievement orientations necessary for goal attainment. White teachers may be ineffective at transmitting and sustaining the intrinsic value orientations to academic achievement that are instilled by black parents. This is because even with (or especially with) the best of intentions, white teachers are likely to be less effective as standards of social comparison than black teachers. Moreover, one important prerequisite for successful socialization of academic achievement within the classroom may be the enhancement of student-teacher empathy through mutual sensitization and exchange (Brown, 1972).

A broader implication of the present discussion for future research on black achievement is the need for a systematic analysis of the interest and value patterns within the black population. At present, it may be noted simply that different tasks occupy high and low hierarchical positions in the value structures of blacks and whites. To the extent that these tasks differ in characteristics relevant to intrinsic and extrinsic achievement orientations, the methodological implications of some of the research reviewed here are less compelling than

the conceptual implications for future research. It may be observed that the convergence of black and white orientations to liked and disliked tasks could represent, for instance, the fact that liked tasks are those for which effort is an important ingredient, and vice-versa. Clearly, some of the important investigations to be conducted in the future should include an analysis of the task characteristics associated with high and low intrinsic interest, cultural valuation, and systems of formal and informal social reinforcement.

Footnotes

1. It may be considered that the notion we are entertaining here with regard to interest is not different from a conception of achievement motivation in terms of secondary (learned) as opposed to primary (unlearned) drives. However, it should not be inferred that an argument against the present discussion of task interests, as merely an analysis of the acquisition by certain activities of secondary reinforcement characteristics, is one with which the author would disagree. It would not be regarded as a counter-argument in any sense, but rather as merely a restatement (or further elaboration) in different theoretical terms.
2. A further description of the general paradigm is presented by Weiner and Kukla (1970) and Weiner and Peter (1973). A complete description of the method as used by Banks et al. is available upon request from the senior author.
3. All results reported here refer to analysis of variance effects significant ("different," "greater," or "less") or non-significant ("equal" or "non-different") at the .05 level. Further details of the data analysis in each of the experiments by Banks and his associates are available upon request.

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